KEY FINDINGS FROM REPORTING PERIOD THREE
October 20 – November 2, 2017

INTRODUCTION
The Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA), a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization devoted to electoral democracy and citizen’s participation, is playing an active role in the Anambra 2017 governorship election. On September 27, YIAGA deployed Long-Term Observation (LTOs) to Anambra state to observe the November 2017 pre-election environment. This report is the third in a series of four (4) to be released by YIAGA. It highlights the key findings of observations from the first and second reporting phases. In the previous pre-election environment’s report, we presented our findings regarding activities of major political actors, most notably the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), political parties and civil society organizations (CSOs), of the youth and marginalized groups with emphasis on the state of preparedness, electioneering campaigns, voter education, participation, election security and threats of violence, among others. In this third phase, the main concerns include building early warning signs, informed advocacy and documenting stakeholders’ engagements in the pre-elections environment.

SUMMARY FINDINGS
1. Compared to the first and second reporting periods, there is an impressive increase in preparation by INEC in most (95%) of the 21 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Anambra state;
2. There is an increase in the level of voter education programs or campaigns by INEC and CSOs, compared to the first and second reporting periods. However, voter education still remains relatively low in the current reporting period;
3. Across the 21 LGAs, there is little or no voter education program and messaging targeted at special interest and marginalized groups, such as youth, women and people with disabilities (PWDs);
4. Youth and women groups are seen to be increasingly engaging the political space through canvassing for votes for political parties and candidates;
5. Finally, the use of derogatory languages against candidates on the basis of their gender, age and faith remains minimal.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. YIAGA calls on CSOs, political parties, NOA and INEC to increase their efforts to raise voters’ awareness of the election process, using all available media, including radio, community engagement and social media.

2. To further the goal of having marginalized or disadvantaged groups participate equally in the democratic process, electoral stakeholders should prioritize targeted voter education, for the disadvantage groups.

3. YIAGA would like to call on political parties to openly shun hate speech, inflammatory language and divisive rhetoric based on age, origin, gender, religion and disability; all Nigerians have the right to exercise their franchise in an environment without threat to their safety or character.
METHODOLOGY

YIAGA’s WTV has closely monitored the pre-election environment processes since September 27. This entailed deploying LTOs in each of the 21 LGAs of Anambra State to gather systematic information about the pre-election environment, including early warning signs of electoral violence. To achieve this, YIAGA’s WTV LTOs were equipped with a checklist to observe and report on the electoral and political environment in the state. All YIAGA’s WTV LTOs were recruited from the LGAs within which they reside to observe electoral activities relating to voter education, political campaign activities, activities of marginalized groups (youth, women, and PWDs) and election-related violence in the pre-election period. Their reports cover activities of the INEC, political parties, National Orientation Agency (NOA), CSOs, women and youth groups. The observers report their observations/findings on a bi-monthly basis via coded text messages to a YIAGA data centre. Within reporting timeframes, observers also report on early warning signs and critical incidents demanding urgent attention as soon as they happen. The reports are compiled and shared with relevant election stakeholders for needed response.

YIAGA’s WTV pre-election observation (PREO) findings are not statistically representative of the entire state. However, they provide an indication of emerging trends during the pre-election period. Unlike the WTV election-day observation methodology, YIAGA does not rely on sample-based observation to carry out its PREO. YIAGA, therefore, encourages users of this report to independently corroborate and respond appropriately to trends identified in this report.

MAIN FINDINGS

ELECTION-RELATED PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES BY INEC

INEC is central to the administration of elections in Nigeria. It has the mandate for the most important responsibilities in the electoral cycle, including pre-election activities like continued voter registration, voter education, distribution of Permanent Voters’ Card (PVC), etc. In most of the LGAs (95%), our LTOs found an impressive increase in preparations for November 18 polls compared to previous PREO reporting periods. This was evident in ongoing activities like: preparations and plans for training of polling staff, voter education and distributions of PVCs. However, YIAGA received reports from a few (5%) LGAs that did not witness adequate preparation by INEC.

41% Observed or heard on form of election preparatory activity undertaken by INEC

5% LGAs that did not witness preparation by INEC.
Voter Information Workshops/Campaigns

Voter information/education workshops or campaigns are important means to ensure that eligible voters get the requisite information that ensure they understand how to exercise their rights of universal and equal suffrage. YiAGA’s WTIV LTOs reported seeing limited civic/voter education activities in the state. However, they noted that where it occurred, voter education was mainly done through radio and “one to one” contact. WTIV LTOs were directly exposed to voter education workshops by INEC in less than a quarter (16%) of the 21 LGAs, and to voter information by CSOs in only 16% of LGAs. Though still considerably low, these postings represent significant improvements in voter education activities by INEC and CSOs compared to the last two (2) reporting periods. INEC and NOA have a mandate to inform Nigerian citizens about the electoral processes and their effort is complemented by CSOs.

Voter Information campaigns or workshops undertaken
INEC, NOA and CSOs in both first, second and third reporting periods

**Voter information workshops by INEC:**

- **PERIOD #1:** 4%
- **PERIOD #2:** 11%
- **PERIOD #3:** 16%

**Voter information workshops by NOA:**

- **PERIOD #1:** 0%
- **PERIOD #2:** 0%
- **PERIOD #3:** 0%

**Voter information workshops by CSOs:**

- **PERIOD #1:** 11%
- **PERIOD #2:** 4%
- **PERIOD #3:** 16%
PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALIZED AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS (YOUTH, WOMEN AND PWDS)

Although the general citizenry should be exposed to civic and voter education, for the purpose of inclusion and diversity, targeted voter education and information to marginalized and disadvantaged groups as audience of the education message is encouraged. WTV TLOs reported of very few interventions aimed at enhancing the capacity of women and PWDS in the upcoming election by INEC, NOA and CSOs. Voter education messaging is continually generic, hence does not respond to the needs of marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Only 4% of WTV TLOs observed or heard that INEC conducted voter education targeted at women and none (0%) observed/heard that NOA conducted voter education targeted at any of the three marginalized or disadvantaged groups. Likewise, no WTV TLOs (0%) observed/heard of targeted voter education message at youth, women and PWD by CSOs.

Activities of Youth, Women Groups

In this reporting period, youth and women’s groups were reported to have been actively involved in canvassing for votes in over a quarter (33%) of the 21 LGAs in Anambra state. However, no PWDS group was sighted or heard canvassing for votes in all 21 LGAs in Anambra state.

POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE

During the reporting period, WTV TLOs were also asked to monitor political parties’ activities such as: posting of party or candidates’ posters and media ads, party meetings and rallies. The All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) were observed to be holding more rallies than the other political parties (both in 89% of the LGAs), compared to 78% and 55% for the APC and UPP. On the other hand, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and United Progressive Party (UPP) were observed to be having more party campaigns through posting of posters, than other political parties in the LGAs. Most notably, all political parties are increasingly expanding their campaigns as elections draw near, in all LGAs. The diagram below shows details of the findings of political party campaign activities in the state.
HATE SPEECH

The observation mission also focused on observing the use of derogatory language or statements that incite hate or violence against a targeted individual or group by all electoral actors, especially political parties. This is to enable YIAGA identify early warning signs for violence and opportunities for conflict mitigation. The WTV LTOs observed major political activities such as: candidate rallies, political gatherings, media reports and statements by candidates and parties, directly and indirectly for inflammatory and divisive rhetoric directed at individuals based on their age, origins, gender, religion and/or physical disabilities. The LTOs reported to have heard violent physical or verbal attacks on street/town political campaign trails (4%) of the 21 LGAs, vandalism or disruption of property belonging to candidates or supporters (11%) of the 21 LGAs, buying and selling of permanent voter cards (PVCs) in 11% of the 21 LGAs, hate speech, violence or intimidation against candidates or people because of their gender (women) in 7% of the 21 LGAs and intimidation or harassment of candidates on the bases of age in at least 1 of the 21 LGAs.

CONCLUSION

Having recognized the emphasis place on the importance of pre-election issues could influence what manifests during and after the election, YIAGA WTV likewise, assures the public that it will continue to observe the Anambra 2017 pre-election environment and will duly share its findings with the public periodically. Should any issue(s) arise(s), YIAGA will expose it/them and call on the appropriate authorities to address it/them.